

THE DRAMA;

OR,

THEATRICAL

POCKET MAGAZINE.

No. VI.

JUNE, 1823.

VOL. IV.

MR. SHERWIN.

Now let us turn to *Dinmont*, there we mark
How bright a flame may issue from a spark;
How fair a picture from a sketch may rise,
When skill the needful colouring supplies.
It is as if the goddess of his art
Had sought a being fit to act the part;
And then had made his comic pow'rs increase,
To let the world behold her master-piece.

THE predilection for the stage is perhaps a stronger infatuation than the partiality entertained for any other profession: to an imaginative mind it possesses all the charms of realised romance. Actors are heroes without peril, tyrants without remorse, lovers without despair; they revel in the energies of the greater passions, but they feel not their stings. This may appear a somewhat improper commencement to the life of a comedian; but though the degree of impulse and its cause are varied, the impulse itself is of the same nature. To revel in the fantasies of humour, and to assume the vivacity of wit—to indulge in the joviality of Bacchanalian excesses without headache, and to come off conqueror in a fray without a bruise, have their

inducements with the spirits of fun—so it was with SHERWIN: from his birth he had a desire to assume the sock, and a medical education could not alter his propensity. He was born at Durham in the year 1799, and had the advantage of collegiate tuition at Edinburgh. When the ardour of acting had fully overcome the terror of modesty, and the doubting disapprobation of friendly hints, he appeared at York. His performance gained him an immediate engagement: at first at a small salary, but which was soon augmented. The disagreeable necessity of playing minor parts in tragedy, which is pretty generally attached to provincial comedians, SHERWIN found particularly irksome; it occupied time which might have been more valuably employed in the study of his own cast of characters. The offer of a situation at Birmingham soon, however, relieved him from this unpleasant necessity; and while there, and at Lichfield and Leicester, under the management of Mr. BUNN, he became noticed as an actor of merit, particularly in Yorkshiresmen, and his name began to be known in the higher theatrical circles. Here, however, he met with a considerable loss in the disastrous fire which destroyed the Birmingham Theatre, nearly all his wardrobe, &c. falling a prey to the flames. During the vacation, he visited Brighton, then under the able management of Mr. BRUNTON, returning to Birmingham when that theatre re-opened. His next step was that which is at once the test and the reward of talent. He appeared in *Dandie Dinmont*, at Drury Lane, on the 14th of February, 1823. Mr. ELLISTON was so well satisfied with his performances as to propose a liberal engagement, which, of course, was accepted. The town, from his frequent repetition of this character, is well aware of his performance of it, and its excellence induces us to regret that this is the only opportunity we have yet had of witnessing his acting. His sterling judgment and forcible humour must finally place him in a very high rank, especially as the death of poor EMERY has left a fine field open to the exhibition of rough unsophisticated nature in its humorous and tragic portraits. We may add, that his private character is such as to ensure him the esteem of many friends; and we conclude our notice, with the hope

of enjoying again, and often the pleasure, which, as a performer, he is so capable of affording us.

MR. I. P. KEMBLE.

[Resumed from page 216.]

Such are Mr. COLMAN's charges against our hero: a few remarks on them will not, we think, be out of place. Mr. C. confesses that he sent the play to the theatre, piecemeal, as fast as the sheets came from his pen. With this fact before us, and mindful that the known habits of that gentleman have never been over favourable to a system of economy, it certainly would not be extravagant to suppose that 2000*l.* might be some inducement for being guilty of a little haste himself. Why did he send the play to the theatre in scraps? Was it by the manager's wish? No; he would have said so if it had. Where then was the necessity for such haste? This question can be answered only by Mr. C. himself. Mr. KEMBLE cannot be blamed for his absence, as that was owing to illness: the author could not attend the rehearsals from the same cause, though even he could attend the first public representation; and with the further disadvantage of giving the respective parts to the performers in an incomplete state, it cannot be surprising that a failure was the result, even without imputing misconduct any where. It is likely that a production so hastily composed was not altogether free from faults, and those of such a sort as to render its fate doubtful; indeed, Miss FARREN was so disgusted with her part, that she refused to perform it after the first night, and on the next representation it was read by Mrs. POWELL. Upon the whole, Mr. K. (though his conduct does not altogether exempt him from animadversion) cannot be justly accused of a more heinous offence than *apparent indifference*, the result, probably, of nervous debility. So far from having a design to injure Mr. C., he appears to have consulted that gentleman's wishes, in preference to his own better judgment, in prematurely causing the play to be acted; but, be this as it may, we must observe, no one

can conscientiously approve the acrimonious censure with which Mr. K. was assailed.

Soon after his return from his Irish tour, a new edition of this celebrated play appeared, in which the original preface was omitted. It was hinted in the "*Monthly Mirror*" at the time, that this new impression was occasioned by some apprehensions, on the part of Mr. C., of personal castigation, though there were various other causes and stories in circulation at the time : however, in the end, a mutual reconciliation took place, and COLMAN agreed to publish a new edition without the preface, Mr. K. therefore exerted himself to purchase all the obnoxious copies without loss of time ; and, indeed, he was so successful, that their price was speedily enhanced from one to two guineas each : at the present time a copy is very rarely to be met with.

In 1796 Mr. K. resigned the direction of the stage business ; but shortly after resumed it, and continued performing a variety of the finest characters of the drama not only in London, but in Edinburgh, Dublin, and other principal towns in England, with increasing admiration, and without a competitor. But it now approached the period when a powerful rival entered the lists, and disputed with him the palm of victory ; we, of course, allude to the late GEO. FRED. COOKE, a man whose mind was formed in one of Nature's noblest moulds ; his understanding was capacious, his judgment clear, his conceptions vigorous, and his memory retentive ; but these fine qualities, which constitute the basis of all that is great in intellect and sublime in soul, this unfortunate man, impaired and destroyed by early and continued habits of dissipation. Happy would it have been for COOKE if intemperance had not clouded his faculties ; but scarcely had he well fixed himself in public opinion ere his character began to be known. In nearly the same moment that witnessed his extraordinary elevation as an actor, the shameful excesses to which he was addicted debased him to the lowest level as a man. The shock his first appearance had given Mr. KEMBLE's popularity that gentleman had speedy opportunities of retrieving, and he did not neglect to avail himself of them. In the end KEMBLE maintained his

pre-eminence, and COOKE fell a victim to his depraved courses.

Previous to the season of 1801, Mr. K. intimated his intention of again resigning his situation as acting manager unless he should be invested with more extensive powers than heretofore, which were promised him. His department in this capacity seems to have been to him a source of more than ordinary trouble; the concerns of the theatre having been long in a state approaching to bankruptcy, contentions between the performers, proprietors, rent-holders, and share-holders, increased to an irreconcilable extent. It was at length found necessary to resort to legal measures to bring the disputes to a close, and disentangle the several interests. After an intricate and patient investigation, the Lord Chancellor recommended that the house should be kept open; and as the payment of the performers salaries was a primary consideration, it being from their exertions only any beneficial results could be expected, that they should be attended to in the first instance. By his Lordship's further interference, an amicable adjustment was effected; and Mr. K. with others who had seceded, resumed their respective stations. From this time there appears nothing worth recording till the close of the season, June 24, 1802, when Mr. K. delivered the usual address, and retired, never again to grace the stage of Old Drury. An intermission of hostilities between France and England having taken place, Mr. K. left London on Friday, July 2, for a tour to the continent. He continued abroad for several months, visiting the principal cities of Spain and France. In Paris he experienced the most flattering reception: the celebrated French actor, TALMA, paid him particular attention, and introduced him to the first circles of rank and fashion, and the literati.(1) He returned from the continent about

(1) The following account of him is extracted from a French paper; it will serve to evince the homage which distinguished talents are sure to receive in all countries.—

“Mr. KEMBLE, the celebrated actor, of London, whose arrival at Paris has been announced by all the papers, is a fine figure, appears to be from thirty-six to forty years of

March, 1803. During his absence, he had the misfortune to lose his father. (1) Soon after his return, he purchased a sixth share in the property of Covent Garden Theatre, for which he paid the sum of 24,000*l*. This arrangement, of course, induced him to quit Drury Lane, and add his talents to the already powerful advantages of the rival house, with which his personal interest was now so imme-

age, his hair dark, and the marked character of his features gives him a physiognomy truly tragic; he understands and speaks perfectly well the French language, but in company he appears to be thoughtful and incommunicative. His manners, however, are very distinguished, and he has in his looks, when he is spoken to, an expression of courtesy, that affords us the best idea of his education; he is said to be well informed, and a particularly good grammarian, which distinguish him from other English actors, who are more attentive to attitude than diction. The *Comedie Française* has received him with all the respect due to the LE KAIN of England; they have already given him a superb dinner, and mean to invite him to a still more brilliant *souper*: TALMA, to whom he had letters of recommendation, does the honours of Paris; they visit together our finest works, and appear to be already united by the most friendly ties. KEMBLE is frank enough to avow, that our mode of theatrical declamation does not suit him, and that he thinks it too remote from nature; but he confesses that some of our actors have great talents. Before his departure, they talk of playing '*Macbeth*,' '*Hamlet*,' and '*Romeo and Juliet*.' This truly French gallantry will have the double advantage of doing honour to a whole people, in the person of their celebrated tragedian, and of drawing good houses."

(1) Mr. ROGER KEMBLE died Dec. 6, 1802, in the eighty-second year of his age, after living to experience the gratification of seeing his children, particularly our hero and Mrs. SIDDONS, arrive at a noble height of fame and fortune by the fair exertion of talent and industry. He was a man more celebrated as a manager than an actor, though, in the latter capacity, it is said, he was a respectable acquisition to provincial theatres.

diately connected. The same cause produced also the desertion of Mrs. SIDDONS, and her consequent engagement at Covent Garden Theatre. Whilst poor Drury suffered by the secession of these two great performers, a shock, from which, in comparison with its rival, its decline for some years may be dated, Mr. KEMBLE succeeded that admirable comedian, the late Mr. LEWIS, as stage manager, and made his first appearance, in the early part of the season, as *Hamlet*. COOKE, KEMBLE, and Mrs. SIDDONS, at this time frequently appearing together, thus forming a combination of talent which has never been surpassed in the theatrical world. About this period the celebrated Master BETTY ("*The Young Roscius*"), the wonder of his day! was acquiring an uncommon share of applause in various provincial theatres; he consequently soon became an object of general celebrity, having previously caused his fame to spread over Ireland, where he made his *debut*, and whence he came to this country; and on the 1st of Dec. 1804, this juvenile performer made his appearance at Covent Garden Theatre, as *Achmet* in "*Barbarossa*," having then just attained his thirteenth year. After performing a host of tragic characters at fifty and a hundred guineas per night, he retired from the stage (for a length of time at least), with a princely fortune, when he had barely entered his teens. His company was courted by noble lords, he was kissed and caressed by noble dames, and had even the honour of being introduced to his Grace the venerable Archbishop of York. He took his leave of the public, with a benefit at Drury Lane Theatre, May 17, 1806, as *Tancred* and *Captain Flash*. The success of this phenomenon, if it did not raise juvenile emulation, at least excited the cupidity of parents, and a host of nursling *Richards'* and pigmy *Macbeths'* were preparing to feed the public rage for infant actors, when the ridiculous mania received a fatal check. On the 23d of Nov. 1805, a Miss MUDIE, a child only eight years of age, and with a figure *remarkably diminutive*, even for her years, who had in the preceding season played first-rate comic characters at Birmingham, Liverpool, Dublin, and other theatres, made her *debut* at Covent Garden Theatre as *Miss Peggy* in "*The Country Girl*;" but the project was too ridiculous to

succeed in London—the public were growing tired of these baby novelties. In the part she chose, her infantine appearance being contrasted with her confidence, deportment, accuracy, and intelligence, rendered the performance, as far as it went, really a curiosity, but as an infant the illusion of the scene was completely lost. During the first scene or two the audience were good humoured, and their sense of the attempt was good naturedly expressed, for, when *Moody* promised to “*send her back into the country*,” they assented their hearty concurrence by loud applause. In the succeeding scenes they testified their contempt and indignation in the most unequivocal manner; shouts of laughter and derision frequently interrupted the actors, and, at last, the whole effect was so out of nature, so truly ludicrous, that not a word could be heard from the stage, but “*rank confusion and disorder reigned supreme*.” The child, who was certainly no infant in assurance, and whose energy was not in the least damped by the disapprobation of the house, now walked to the front of the stage with great confidence, though not without some signs of indignation, and said,

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“I have done nothing to offend you; and, as for those who are sent here to hiss me, *I will be obliged to you to turn them out!*”

This bold speech from such a baby astonished her auditors! Some were violently exasperated; some laughed, hissed, hooted; others cried, “*Off! off!*” and completely decided the pending issue of this extraordinary experiment: when, to appease the general anger, Mr. KEMBLE was forced to make his appearance, and spoke as follows:

“Gentlemen,

“The great applause with which Miss MUDIE has been received at various provincial theatres, encouraged in her friends a hope that her merit might be such as to pass the tribunal of your judgment.—[Violent hisses.]—Be assured, however, gentlemen, that the proprietors of this theatre by no means wish to press any species of entertainment upon

you which may not meet your most perfect approbation.—
 [Loud applause.]—*If, therefore, you will permit Miss*
 MUDIE———.”—[No! no!]

Mr. KEMBLE could not be heard for some time; but, at last, neatly resumed,

“The DRAMA’s laws, the DRAMA’s patrons give.”

“We hope, however, that, as the play has proceeded so far, you will allow Miss MUDIE to finish the character——.”
 —[No! no! was vociferated from all parts.]

Finding this of no avail, Mr. KEMBLE tried his success with the *female* part of the assemblage, by saying, with emphasis,

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“Let me entreat that you will allow Miss MUDIE to finish her part; perhaps, when you are informed that after this night Miss MUDIE will be withdrawn from the stage, you will be induced to comply.”

This last appeal seemed to produce the desired effect, but the calm was deceitful; for, upon the next appearance of the child, the uproar was renewed with such violence, that she was compelled to retire. Mr. MURRAY finally announced that Miss SEARLE would finish the part, and thus tranquillity was restored. From this time the public began to return to their former favourites; to be delighted with the inimitable talents of COOKE, the classic judgment of KEMBLE, and the sublime genius of SIDDONS.

[To be resumed.]

KEMBLIANA.

No. I.

MR. DRAMA,

Under this title I intend forwarding you a series of anecdotes, &c. relative to the celebrated personage with whose

memoirs you are now enriching your elegant publication. The fragments I shall select from the best authorities, being particularly careful not to admit any thing of a commonplace or dubious nature; and, by so doing, endeavour to add a page or two to the many valuable papers which your monthly "Cabinet" preserves from oblivion. I now submit the first number of my paper to the decision of yourself and your numerous readers.

*Yours, &c.
C. G. C.*

June 12, 1823.

1.—STAGE CHRONICLES.

The following appeared soon after the celebrated performances of the "two young Roscii," Master BETTY and Miss MUDIE; they were, I believe, inserted in several periodicals of the time, and gave great satisfaction to those who discouraged the puny attempts of "unfledged lordlings."

1. Now in that day JOHN the KEMBLEITE reigned over the city of Babylon, and the multitude flocked around the gates of his palace, crying, "*Oh, king, reign thou over us for ever.*"

2. But it came to pass that the people of Babylon were in that day of a fickle and perverse nature, insomuch that they waxed weary of JOHN the KEMBLEITE, and took counsel how they might despoil him of his throne.

3. And behold there came from afar off a man with a white beard, called HOUGH, and he bore in his right-hand the youthful BETTYADAD, whose chin was guiltless of beard, neither was there whisker to his cheek.

4. And the people marvelled greatly, crying, "*Oh, prince, who art thou?*" But the man, HOUGH, whispered the youth, "*Answer thou, and say, thy name is NORVAL.*"

5. And the youthful BETTYADAD knitted his flaxen brow, and cried, with a shrill voice, "*My name is NORVAL.*" And lo! the people clapped their hands, and cried, "*Who is like unto the youthful BETTYADAD, who, in wisdom and understanding, far exceedeth JOHN the KEMBLEITE.*"

6. And the nobles of the land brought unto him myrrh

and frankincense, and rich offerings, and arrayed him in purple and fine linen.

7. But such nobles were not of the family of SOLOMON.

8. Now it came to pass in that day that a damsel, called FASHION, held dominion over the city of Babylon, and she called unto her the youthful BETTYADAD, and dandled him on her knee.

9. And behold the song of the minstrel was hushed, and no man heeded the song of DIGNUMAFAT, who singeth in the hall called Vaux—yea, they even hardened their ears against the strains of KELLYBEG the Hibernian, who chopped his thumb with a hatchet in the city of Bagdat.

10. And behold the youthful BETTYADAD buckled on the armour of presumption, girding to his loins the sword of THUMB, and wielded the truncheon, and reigned in the place of JOHN the KEMBLEITE.

11. But behold JOHN the KEMBLEITE detached a Centurion to the north, and detached a Centurion to the south, and, like HEROD of old, seized on all the infants of Egypt, to send one to depose the youthful BETTYADAD.

12. And the little maid MUDIE arose, and JOHN the KEMBLEITE took her by the hand, and led her forth to the walls of the palace, and bad the multitude fall down and worship her.

13. And the maid MUDIE cried with a shrill voice, "*Bud, Bud,*" but the people despitefully entreated her, crying "*Off, off!*" and sent forth, from their tongues and from their teeth, a sound whereat the bravest soldier in the armies of JOHN the KEMBLEITE trembleth and turneth pale.

14. And the sound was as the sound of serpents.

15. Now it came to pass that the youthful BETTYADAD rejoiced greatly heret, and called unto him three witches, and demanded of them his future fate.

16. And one of the witches answered and said, "*Oh, insect of an hour, buzzing around the lofty brow of the mighty one, thy fame is as the mound of sand, which children in sport raise upon the sea-shore—the tide of the people setteth against thee, and bringeth thee to nought.*"

17. And another of the witches said, "*Seest thou that cauldron, from which an infant riseth, bearing on his baby*

brow the round and top of sovereignty ?—Thou art that baby, yea, like the youthful DANIEL, shalt thou be cast into the burning fiery furnace."

18. And they seized him in their arms, and cast him into the cauldron; and the youthful BETTYADAD cried, with a shrill voice, "*Dismiss me, enough !*"

19. And the cauldron sunk, and thunder arose, and darkness fell upon the land; and the fame of the youthful BETTYADAD became even as the bladder of soap, which children, in play, blow from the bowl of the tobacco-pipe.
J.

2.—GEO. FRED. COOKE.

Mr. KEMBLE, on one occasion, honourably evinced the high sense in which he held this excellent actor's powers, by performing the part of *Richmond* to COOKE's *Gloster*,—an instance of condescension, which, I think, it would be desirable to see oftener repeated among performers. One man cannot be superior in every thing; and if, by placing himself at times in a subordinate rank, he can improve the general excellence, or heighten individual enjoyment, he should not be too proud to be thus laudably engaged. Genius may sometimes descend from its elevated sphere, and be usefully employed in an inferior station, without loss of dignity, or diminution of lustre.

STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEMBLE.

— non ego te meis
Chartis inornatum silebo
Totve tuos patiar labores
Impune, * * *, carpere lividas
Obliviones.

The star that o'er departed years
Shed forth its bright and beauteous beam,
Even as its brilliance disappears,
Proclaims that life is all a dream.

KEMBLE ! before our visions thou
Did'st pass, the paragon of men ;
Thine eyes flash'd lightnings, and thy brow
Awed darkness to her den !

Thy genius took a thousand forms,
To grace, to dazzle, to dismay,
Now brooding o'er dim-gather'd storms,
Now shedding rosy, radiant day.
Witness the Moor's all-jealous ire ;
Witness the prince's restless eye ;
Witness the king's contrition dire,
The Roman's dignity.

Thou stood'st an emblem to our eyes,
Of all that saddens or sublimes,
A form descended from the skies,
To nobly image ancient times,
To say, " Behold in me revived,
Torn from tradition's pictured page,
One, who, in guilt or glory lived,
In some far vanish'd age !"

Lo ! even thou the shade art fled,
Upon a far romantic shore,
Fate bade thee mingle with the dead,
And we behold thy form no more !
No more !—Yet brightly shalt thou shine,
A thought that never can depart,
Mingled with youth's warm dreams divine,
In many a grateful heart.

Amidst admiring thousands, thou
The awful passions of the soul
Badest rise and work ; and, o'er thy brow,
The sun did shine, the storm did roll.
Love, like the zephyr's vernal sigh,
Anger, like Ætna when it burns,
Despair, and guilt, and jealousy,
In all their varied turns.

But thou hast left us, thou art gone
 To rest in low and lonely bed,
 Torn off from life, an added one
 To the great legion of the dead.
 SHAKSPEARE ! his wreath is twined with yours :
 With you he blends his deathless lot :
 Ne'er while the Drama's reign endures
 Can KEMBLE be forgot !

Δ.

PORTRAIT OF A PLAYER.

DRAWN IN THE YEAR 1630.

“ He knows the right use of the worlde wherein hee comes to play a part and so away. His life is not idle, for it is all action, and no man need be more wary in his doings, for the eyes of all men are upon him. His profession has in it a kind of contradiction, for none is more disliked, and yet none more applauded ; and hee has this misfortune of some schollers, too much witte makes him a fool. He is like our painting gentlewomen, seldome in his owne face, seldomer in his own cloathes, and hee pleases the better he counterfeits, except onely when he is disguised with straw for gold lace. Hee does not onely personate on the stage, but some time in the streete ; for he is masked still in the habite of a gentleman. His partes find him oaths and good words, which he keeps for his use and discourse, and makes shew with them of a fashionable companion. Hee is tragicall on the stage, but rampant in the tyring house, and swears oaths there which he never cond. The waiting women, spectators, are ouer eares in love with him, and ladies send for him to act in their chambers. Your iunes of court men were undone but for him ; hee is their chiefe gweste and imployment, and the sole businesse that makes them afternoone's men. The poet only is his tyrant, and hee is bound to make his friend's friend drunk at his charges. Shroue Tuesday he fears as much as the bawds, and Lent is more damage to him than the butcher. Hee was neuer so much discredited

as in one act, and that was of parliament, which giveth hostlers privilege before him, for which he abhors it more than a corrupt judge; but, to give him his due, one well-furnish'd actor has enough in him for five common gentlemen, and if he have a good body for size, and for resolution hee shall challenge any *Cato*, for it has been his practice to die brauely."

THE ORIGIN OF CLOWNS

ON THE ENGLISH STAGE,

BY EDWARD MALONE, ESQ.

In the infancy of the English stage it was customary in every piece to introduce a clown, "by his mimic gestures, to breed in the less capable mirth and laughter." (1) The privileges of the clown were very extensive; for, between the acts, and sometimes between the scenes, he claimed a right to enter on the stage, and to excite merriment, by any species of buffoonery that struck him. Like the harlequin of the Italian comedy, his wit was often extemporal, and he sometimes entered into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with some of the audience. (2) He generally

(1) HEYWOOD'S "*History of Women*," 1624.

(2) In BROOM'S "*Antipodes*," which was performed at the theatre in Salisbury Court, in 1638, a *by-play*, as he calls it, is represented in his comedy,—a word, for the application of which we are indebted to this writer, there being no other term in our language that I know of, which so properly expresses that species of interlude which we find in our poets—*Hamlet*, and other pieces. The actors in this *by-play* being called together by Lord Letoy, he gives them some instructions concerning their mode of acting, which prove that the clowns in SHAKESPEARE'S time frequently held a dialogue with the audience.

"*Let.* ————— Go; be ready.

But you, Sir, are incorrigible, and
Take licence to yourself to add unto
Your parts your own free fancy; and sometimes
To alter or diminish what the writer

threw his thoughts into hobbling doggrel verses, which he made shorter or longer as he found convenient ; but however irregular his metre might be, or whatever the length of his verses, he always took care to tag them with words of corresponding sound ; like DRYDEN's *Doeg*,

“ He fagotted his notions as they fell,
And if they rhymed and rattled all was well.”

THOMAS WILSON and RICHARD TARLETON, both sworn servants to Queen ELIZABETH, were the most popular performers of that time in this department of the Drama, and are highly praised by the continuator of STOWE's *Annals*, for “ their wonderous plentiful, pleasant, and *extemporal* wit.” (1) TARLETON, whose comic powers were so great, that, according to Sir RICHARD BAKER, “ he delighted the spectators before he had spoken a word,” is thus described in a very rare old pamphlet : (2) “ The nexte by his sute of russet, his buttoned cap, his taber, his standing on the toe, and other tricks, I knew to be either the body or resemblance of TARLETON, who, living,

With care and skill composed, and when you are
To speak to your co-actors in the scene,
You hold interlocution with the audience.

“ *Bip.* That is a way, my lord, hath been allowed
On elder stages to move mirth and laughter.

“ *Let.* Yes, in the days of TARLETON and KEMPE,
Before the stage was purged from barbarism,
And brought to the perfection it now shines with,
Then fools and jesters spent their wit, because
The poets were wise enough to save their own
For profitabler uses.”

(1) HOWE's edition of STOWE's *Chronicle*, 1631, p. 698. See also GABRIEL HARVEY's *Four Letters*, 4to. 1592, p. 9. “ Who, in London, hath not heard of his fond disguisinge of a master of artes with ruffianly haire, unseemely apparel, and more unseemely company ? His vaine glorious and Thrasonickall bravery ? His piperly *extemporizing* and *Tarletonizing* ? ” &c.

(2) “ *Kinde-Hartes Dream*,” by HENRY CHETTLER, 4to. no date, but published in December, 1592.

for his pleasant conceyts was of all men liked, and dying, for mirth left not his like." In 1611, was published a book, entitled his "*Jeasts*," in which some specimens are given of the extempore wit, which our ancestors thought so excellent. As he was performing some part "at the Bull in Bishopsgate Street, where the Queene's players oftentimes played," while he was "kneeling down to aske his father's blessing," a fellow in the gallery threw an apple at him, which hit him on the cheek. He immediately took up the apple, and advancing to the audience, addressed them in these lines:—

"Gentlemen, this fellow, with his face of mapple,(1)
Instead of a pippin hath thrown me an apple;
But, as for an apple, he hath cast a crab,
So, instead of an honest woman, God hath sent him a drab."

"The people," says the relater, "laughed heartily, for the fellow had a quean to his wife."

(1) This appears to have been formerly a common sarcasm. There is a tradition still preserved in Stratford, of SHAKESPEARE's comparing the carbuncled face of a drunken blacksmith to a *maple*. The blacksmith accosted him, as he was leaning over a mercer's door, with

"Now, Mr. SHAKESPEARE, tell me, if you can,
The difference between a youth and a young man."

To which our poet immediately replied,

"Thou son of fire, with thy *face like a maple*,
The same difference between a scalded and coddled apple."

This anecdote was related near fifty years ago to a gentleman at Stratford, by a person then above eighty years of age, whose father might have been contemporary with SHAKESPEARE. It is observable that a similar imagery may be traced in "*The Comedy of Errors*."

"Though now this *grained face* of mine be hid, &c."

The bark of the maple is uncommonly rough, and the grain of one of the sorts of this tree (according to EVELYN) is "undulated and crisped into a variety of curls."

Another of these stories, which I shall give in the author's own words, establishes, what I have already mentioned, that it was customary for the clown to talk to the audience or the actor's *ad libitum*.

"At the Bull at Bishopsgate, was a play of *Henry V.*" [the performance which preceded SHAKSPEARE's] wherein the judge was to take a box on the eare; and because he was absent that should take the blow, TARLETON himself, ever forward to please, took upon him to play the same judge, besides his own part of the *Clowne*; and KNEL, then playing *Henry V.* hit TARLETON a sound box, indeed, which made the people laugh the more, because it was he; but, anon, the judge goes in, and immediately TARLETON, in his clowne's cloaths, comes out and asks the actors, '*What news?*'—'O,' saith one, '*had'st thou been here, thou should'st have seen Prince HENRY hit the judge a terrible box on the eare.*'—'What man,' said TARLETON, '*strike a judge!*'—'It is true, i'faith,' said the other.—'No other like,' said TARLETON, '*and it could not be but terrible to the judge, when the report so terrifies me, that methinks the blowe remains still on my cheek, that it burns againe.*' The people laught at this mightily, and to this day I have heard it commended for rare; but no marvell, for he had many of these. But I would see our clownes in these days do the like. No, I warrant ye; and yet they thinke well of themselves too."

The last words show that this practice was not discontinued in the time of SHAKSPEARE, and we here see that he had abundant reason for his precept in "*Hamlet.*" Let those that *play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them*; for there be of them that will of themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered."

[To be concluded in our next.]



LINES,

ON FIRST HEARING MISS STEPHENS SING "AULD ROBIN GRAY."

Oh! when I hear thee sing of "*Jamie far away*,"
"Of father and of mither," and of "*Auld Robin Gray*,"
I listen till I think it is JEANIE'S self I hear,
"And I look in thy face" with a blessing and a tear.
"I look in thy face," for my heart it is not cold.
Though winter's frost is stealing on and I am growing old,
Those tones I shall remember as long as I live,
And the blessing and the tear shall be the thanks I give.
The tear it is for summers that so blithesome have been,
For the flowers that have faded, and the "days that I have
seen,"
The *blessing* is for thee lassie!—may'st thou still rejoice,
Tho' tenderness is on thy look, and pity in thy voice.
The blessing is for thee, whose song so sadly sweet,
Recalls the music of "*Lang syne*," to which my heart has
beat,
Oh! may the days that shine to thee, still happiness prolong,
And every sorrow of the heart be ended with thy song.

DRAMATIC FRAGMENTA.

"I lay up and range in order *treasures* which I may bring forth as occasion offers; and if, peradventure, you would know under what leader, under what guide, I enlist myself, I am ready to confess, that, tied down implicitly to follow no particular master, I extract sometimes from one, sometimes from another."

126.—WYCHERLY.

It may be presumed that WYCHERLY was a frequent visitor at WILL'S Coffee-house, at that time the usual resort of wits, and pretenders to wit. In a book called

the "*English Theophrastus, or the Manners of the Age*," 1706, is the following passage :—"Those people talk most who have the least to say. Go to WILL's, and you'll hardly hear the great WYCHERLY speak two sentences in a quarter of an hour ; while BLATERO, HAMILUS, TERPI-LUS, and twenty more egregious coxcombs, deafen the company with their political nonsense."

127.—CORNELLYS THE ACTOR, THE ONCE FAMOUS "LINGO"
OF THE DUBLIN STAGE.

This actor purchased, without the knowledge of his wife, a share of a lottery ticket, and being rated soundly by the prudent dame, for what she termed an act of great folly, he returned to the lottery office, and entreated the clerk to give him back his money. This was refused, but a gentleman who was present (the late Colonel O'DONEL, brother to Sir NEAL O'DONEL) seeing his distress, purchased the share at the price he had paid for it ; and, much to poor *Lingo's* mortification, the number was drawn a capital prize, and he lost by the prudence of his wife a sum of money which would have insured him a decent competence for life.

128.—MADAME DAVIS.

The celebrated ballad of "*My lodging is on the cold ground*," the air of which is so popular in the present day, and which has occasioned several parodies, was originally sung in a play called the "*Rivals*," by Mrs. DAVIS, (familiarily called MOLL DAVIS) afterwards mistress to CHARLES II. This play was acted by Sir WM. D'AVRANT's company, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Old DOWNES, the prompter, tells us, that all the women characters were played admirably, but the part of *Celia* (in which this song occurs) was performed so charmingly, that not long after it raised her from her bed on the cold ground to a bed royal. The mezzotinto portrait, after LELY, of "*Madame DAVIS*," shows her to have been a most beautiful creature.

129.—PARENTHESIS.

One day, RICH, at a rehearsal, observed to an actress that she misconceived his directions, and repeated a passage very improperly; he told her it was a *parenthesis*, and therefore required a different tone of voice, and a greater degree of volubility than the rest of the sentence. "*A parenthesis*," said the lady, "what's that?" Her mother, who happened to be present, blushing for her daughter's ignorance, immediately broke out, "O, what an infernal limb of an actress will you make not knowing the meaning of *prentice*, and that it is the plural number of *prentices*!"

130.—LOYALTY OF THE PLAYERS.

The adherence of the players, with scarcely an exception, to the cause of CHARLES I. has always been strongly insisted upon by our dramatic historians, and I believe with perfect justice. Were the following paragraph, however, to be taken in any other light than that of a mere joke, it would tend to throw great doubts upon this asserted loyalty; it is extracted from "*Mercurius Fumigatus*, Wednesday, Sept. 12, to Wednesday, Sept. 19, 1655. This was an indecent bantering kind of paper published during CROMWELL's usurpation; and several numbers are contained in the collection of old newspapers included in Dr. BURNEY's library lately published by the British Museum. The following is the passage above mentioned:—

"The players at the *Red Bull*, and all the Jack Puddings at Southwark Fair last Friday, *'listed themselves for soldiers*. A little after a great rout was given, and some prisoners taken, which, presently paying their ransom, were released.

"So were the puddings and the fiddlers,
The actors and the hey-down diddlers,
Put by their action and their parts,
And led away with heavy hearts:
The reason was, as some do say,
'Cause they can't *work*, but live by *play*."

131.—DRYDEN.

Tradition informs us that DRYDEN was not wholly free from the jealousy of rivals. He would compliment CROWNE (as old JACOB TONSON told Mr. SPENCE), when a play of his failed, but was cold to him if he met with success. He would sometimes say that CROWNE had genius; but then he always added, that *his* father and CROWNE's mother were very well acquainted.

132.—THE DEVIL.

In the ancient moralities and early entertainments of the stage the Devil was frequently introduced as a character; and it appears to have been customary for him to appear before the audience with a cry of "*ho! ho! ho!*" somewhat similar probably to the ejaculations of the modern clown. See "*Gammer Gurton's Needle*," Act II. Sc. 3; and "*The Devil is an Ass*," by B. JONSON, Act I. Sc. 1. From the following passage in "*Wily Beguiled*," 1606, we learn the manner in which the character used to be dressed. "Tush! feare not the dodge; I'll rather put on my flashing red rose and my flaming face, and come wrapped in a calfe's skin, and cry *ho! ho!*" &c. Again, "I'll put me on my great carnation nose, and wrap me in a rousing calf's-skin suit, and come like some hobgoblin, or some Devil ascended from the grisly pit of hell, and like a scarebabe make him take to his legs; I'll *play* the Devil, I warrant ye."

133.—STAGE MOTTOES.

What is the reason why a motto is placed over the Covent Garden stage yet none over that of Drury Lane? It is not, to be sure, a matter of much moment, but these "little things are great to little men." From a passage in CHETWOOD'S "*History of the Stage*," 1749, it appears not only that Drury was formerly as well furnished as her rival in this respect, but also that the present Covent Garden motto was pilfered from her—*Ecce Signum*.

"If theatrical performers are servants to the public, they should never attempt to outdress their masters. '*Veluti in Speculum*,' the motto over the front of Drury

Lane Theatre, will serve both auditors and actors; and I think carries a more instructive meaning than the other, '*Vivitur Ingenio*,' which only relates to the stage."

134.—MADAME CATALANI

Gave a concert last year at Liverpool, which was not very numerously attended. One of the Liverpool papers, describing the powers of her voice, said, "*Such was the torrent of sound she emitted at one moment, that the glass globules pendant from the central chandelier were powerfully agitated, and struck against each other!*"

135.—BARTON HOLIDAY.

A dramatist of this name was the author of a comedy called "*Technogamia, or the Marriage of the Arts*," which was performed at Christ-Church Hall, Oxford, in 1617. ANTHONY WOOD relates the following anecdote of a subsequent representation, of the same piece:—"The wits of these times being minded to shew themselves before the King, (JAMES I.) were resolved, with leave, to act the same comedy at Woodstock, whereupon the author, making some foolish alterations in it, it was accordingly acted on a Sunday night, August 26, 1621; but it being too grave for the King, and too scholastic for the auditory, or, as some have said, the actors having taken too much wine before they began, his Majesty, after two acts, offered several times to withdraw. At length being persuaded by some of those who were near him to have patience, till it was ended, lest the young men should be discouraged, he sat down though much against his will, whereupon these verses were made by a certain scholar:—

"At Christ Church *Marriage* done before the King,
Lest that these mates should want an offering,
The King himself did offer—what, I pray?
He offered twice or thrice—to go away."

Lambeth, April 6, 1823.

GLANVILLE.

THE DRAMATIC SKETCHER.

No. XIII.

BY J. W. DALBY.

BUCKINGHAM and FENELLA.

Fenella. (As Zarah, an Oriental Princess, unveiling.)

Now gaze, my lord !

Buckingham. 'Tis not the face I sought.*Fenella.* Perchance 'tis not so fair ?*Buckingham.* And yet, by heaven;
I own it one well worth the looking at.*Fenella.* Farewell, my lord.

(Going.)

Buckingham. (Taking her hand). Nay, 'for a little while,
Fair princess, I must claim your company :
Remember that by voluntary pledge
You stand here for another ; none may brave
Me with impunity.*Fenella.* Oh, if your grace
Would honour me with some commands, I wait
Willingly to receive them.*Buckingham.* What ! fair Zarah,
Fear you not my resentment, or my love ?*Fenella.* No, by this glove ! I tremble not at either.
How mean a passion must be your resentment,
If it can stoop to injure such as I ;
And for your love, my lord, good lack ! good lack !*Buckingham.* And why good lack ? Why this contemptuous tone ?
Think you that Buckingham hath never loved,
Or been beloved again ?*Fenella.* He may have thought so ;
But by what slight and worthless creatures ! things
Of fickleness and fancy, whose weak heads
Are rendered giddy by a playhouse rant,
Whose brains are only filled with red-heel'd shoes
And satin buskins, and who run stark mad
Upon the argument of a George and star.

Buckingham. And are there in *your* climate, scornful princess,

No fair ones frail as those you here describe ?

Fenella. There are ; but men esteem the best of them
As parrots or as monkeys ; things bereft
Of sense and soul, and without head or heart.

Buckingham. Oh, what a pleasant, reasonable trade
Must courtship be in your most favour'd clime !

Fenella. Our nearness to the sun hath purified
Our passions even while it gave them strength.
The icicles of your frozen land as soon
Shall hammer hot bars into ploughshares, as
The empty foppery, the bootless folly
Of your feigned gallantry make upon *my* heart
The impression of an instant.

Buckingham. By the rood !

You talk as if you knew of passion more
Than the mere theory. Fair lady, sit,
Nor grieve if I detain you. It were hard
To part too quickly with so fine an eye,
An eye that beams with wild, unusual fire ?
Nor will I lose too suddenly a voice
Of such unequall'd melody. You know
'Twere useless to deny it, or *have* known
What 'tis to love ?

Fenella. I know—no matter if
I know it by experience, or through
What others have reported ; but I feel
To love as I would love, would be to yield
Not an iota unto avarice,
Or heartless sanity ; not to sacrifice
The slightest feeling unto interest,
Or proud ambition ; but to give up ALL
To true affection and a faithful heart !

Buckingham. Tell me, fair Zarah, candidly, how many
Of your frail sex could feel a love like this ?

Fenella. Oh, more by thousands than there are of your's
To merit it !—Alas, how oft we see
The female, pale, and wretched, and degraded,
Still following with patient constancy
The footsteps of an unrelenting tyrant ;

Submitting still to all his injustice
 With the endurance of a spaniel, who
 Prizes but one look from his master, though
 The surliest groom that ever wore a frown,
 More than all pleasures which the world beside
 Can furnish forth. Oh, think what such would be
 To one who merited and repaid such deep
 And dear devotion !

Buckingham. Why, just the reverse !
 And for your simile, I, for my part, see
 But small resemblance ; since I cannot charge
 My spaniel with any perfidy ;
 But for my mistresses—to confess the truth,
 I must be always in confounded haste
 If I would have the world give me the credit
 Of changing them ere they quit me.

Fenella. And they
 Serve you but rightly ; for, my lord, what are you ?
 Nay, never think to frown me into silence,
 For I can look upon that sun from which
 Europe's pale maidens shrink ; and I dare speak
 Even to you a truth, which you for once
Shall listen to : Nature hath done its part,
 And made a fair outside ; and courtly learning
 Hath not withheld its share. You are high born,
 It is the accident of birth ; handsome,
 'Tis the caprice of nature ; generous,
 Because to give is easier than deny.
 You are well apparell'd, 'tis your tailor's praise,
 Well natur'd in the main, because you have
 Both youth and health ; and brave, because to be
 Otherwise were to be degraded ; and
 Witty, because you cannot help it.

Buckingham (*darting a glance on one of the large mirrors*). Madam,
 You allow me more than I've pretensions to ;
 And surely quite enough to make my way
 To female favour !—Noble, court-like, handsome,
 Generous, well-dress'd, good-humour'd, brave, and witty !
Fenella. Yet I have not allowed you *head or heart* !
 Nay, redden not as you would fly at me ;

'Tis possible that nature gave you both.
 But both have been perverted and confounded
 By selfishness and folly. The MAN whom I
 Consider as deserving of the name,
 Is one whose thoughts and actions are for others,
 Not for himself alone ; whose lofty aim,
 Adopted on just principles, is ne'er
 Abandoned, while or earth or heaven afford
 The means of its accomplishment. He is
 One who seeks not by any specious road
 To raise an indirect advantage, or
 Takes a wrong path to gain a real good purpose ;
*Such were the man for whom a woman's heart
 Should beat with constant truth while he exists,
 And break when he expires !*

Buckingham. Sweet preacher ! I
 So love thy doctrine and thyself, I swear ———

(Attempting to embrace her.)

Fenella. Fool ! dost thou think to cage me ? Fare thee
 well. *(Leaps from a window and escapes.)*

. It is scarcely necessary to state, that in the above sketch I have merely versified one of the most interesting dialogues in "PEVERIL OF THE PEAK:" my own poor interpolations will be easily distinguished from the simple and vigorous language of the illustrious novelist.

DRAMATIC QUERIES.

Catcalls.—At what period was the custom of blowing catcalls at the theatre discontinued ?

The last mention of these formidable instruments which I recollect to have met with occurs in Dr. JOHNSON'S prologue to "*Irene*," 1749 ; it is evident they were then in common use ; for, while he beseeches the audience to be merciful, he nevertheless promises, that,

" Should partial *catcalls* all his hopes confound,
 He'll bid no trumpet quell the fatal sound."

About this period the use of catcalls appears gradually to

have been discontinued, though I am aware it was revived, with remarkable effect, during the great O P. war in 1809.

Stage Costume.—In the representations of *comedy* at our theatres, when the scene is laid in our own country, the elderly characters are invariably habited in the costume which was peculiar to the old gentlemen and ladies of former times, while the younger members of the *Dramatis Personæ* as regularly appear dressed in the height of the prevailing fashion; one exception, however, sometimes occurs, when we see a young fellow of eighteen in a full court dress, which would inevitably excite laughter and ridicule were it assumed in private life. I shall be glad to know whether any plausible reason can be assigned for this apparently absurd custom, and whether “they manage these things better in France?” (1).

Play-bills.—Can any reason but custom be assigned for the practice of printing the names of the performers, without those of the characters they are to perform, during the whole of the first season a new piece is represented? Surely this is very absurd, for it is precisely when this information is most wanted that it is thus unaccountably withheld.

Prologues and Epilogues.—How did the custom of speaking these compositions originate? Prologues may, perhaps, be easily accounted for, as intended to supplicate the mercy of the audience in behalf of the author; but the utility of *epilogues* I can by no means discover, as the fate of the piece is determined before it is spoken, and it cannot, therefore, influence the auditory in any way with respect to their decision. I cannot find that *epilogues* were

(1) I have only alluded to the practice in the representation of *comedies*, though it equally prevails in *farces*, because I consider almost any thing as justifiable in the latter which is calculated to heighten the ludicrous nature of the scene; but in the former, which professes to be a faithful portraiture of human life, I think it should be “reformed altogether.”

considered as *indispensable* appendages to plays much before the middle of the 17th century, but were either added or omitted as suited the convenience of the author. A remarkable difference exists between the length of the pieces of this description, with which the dramatists of the "olden time" graced their compositions, and those with which we are favoured by their brethren of the present age. Six or eight lines appear to have been then considered as quite sufficient for the purpose; while, on the contrary, we now can sit and hear fifty or sixty repeated without once exclaiming, with *Polonius*, "This is too long!" But, of fifty-six plays written by BEAUMONT and FLETCHER, scarcely any have *epilogues* of so many as a dozen lines. Perhaps the shortest instance of this kind of composition is the *epilogue* to MAY's "*Heir*," 1633, and I think my readers will say, "'Tis brief as woman's love."

THE EPILOGUE.

" Our *Heir* is fallen from her inheritance,
But has obtained her love; you may advance
Her higher yet, and from your pleased hands give
A dowry that will make her truly live."

Encore.—How are we to account for the custom which prevails in our theatres of making use of this *foreign* word to express a wish for the repetition of songs, and for how long a period has it been thus used? Perhaps some of your readers, who are better read than myself in the works of our ancient dramatists, will be able to give me some information on this head, by pointing out any instances in which mention of the expression may be made in prologues, epilogues, introductory addresses, &c. That the *real meaning* of the word is unknown to the "million" is evident from the frequent misapplication of it. I have as often heard "*ancour*" roared forth in approbation of the acting of KEMBLE, KEAN, YOUNG, Miss O'NEILL, &c. as to express a wish for the repetition of any of BRAHAM's or Miss STEPHENS's songs. An instance of the wrong application of this word occurred a few years since at the Richmond Theatre, when that elegant and accomplished amateur, Mr. COATES, was representing the love-sick

Romeo, the enthusiasm of the audience at his exquisite acting in the dying scene was so great that many voices cried out *encore!* when, to the astonishment and delight of every one, Mr. COATES, taking the word in its literal sense (thinking it a high compliment to his *unrivalled* talents), actually *died over again!!!*

An instance may be adduced of this occurring at a regular theatre. At the time Mr. SHERIDAN was manager of the Dublin Theatre, he brought forward the tragedy of "*Mahomet the Impostor*," [translated by MILLER from the French of VOLTAIRE.] The principal characters were thus adjusted:—*Zaphna*, Mr. SHERIDAN; *Mahomet*, Mr. SOWDON; *Alcanor*, Mr. DIGGES; and *Palmira*, Mrs. WOFFINGTON. It was performed, for the first time, on Saturday, Feb. 2, 1754: the popular party was very conspicuous in the Pit. No sooner had Mr. DIGGES delivered the speech in Act I. Sc. 1,

" ——— If ye powers divine!
Ye mark the movements of this nether world,
And bring them to account, crush, crush, those vipers,
Who, singled out by the community
To guard their rights, shall, for a grasp of ore,
Or paltry office, sell them to the foe,"

than a loud cry of *encore* from the Pit prevented the connecting reply; and, after a very natural surprise upon the part of the actor, induced him to comply with so vociferous a desire. This concession excited the warmest applause, and the performance was suffered to proceed, although, till its termination, the best scenes in which Mr. SHERIDAN and Mrs. WOFFINGTON were engaged, passed away without notice, while the character of *Alcanor* was distinguished at every opportunity by the loudest approbation.

—
Flourish of Trumpets.—Why is the entrance of any royal or other important personage on the stage invariably announced by the same kind of flourish of trumpets? It is certainly extraordinary that *Hamlet*, *Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Cato*, *Tamerlane*, *King John*, *King Lewis*, &c. &c. should all of them be forced to strut to one tune."

Perhaps it has been customary, from an early period, before trumpetting was brought to such perfection as it is now. Surely the managers might relieve us from the absurdity of witnessing a Danish, Scottish, Roman, or English court, assembling precisely at the same summons.

Coriolanus.—Mr. J. P. KEMBLE has been very highly applauded, and certainly not unjustly, for the classical manner in which he revived several of SHAKESPEARE'S best productions during the time he was manager of Covent Garden Theatre. I believe, however, it has struck many, as well as myself, as being somewhat of an incongruity to introduce the *modern* composition, "*See the conquering hero comes*," on the triumphant entry of *Coriolanus* after the defeat of the Volscii. However appropriate the above air might have been to greet the victor of Waterloo on his arrival in this country, yet every candid person must allow, that the introduction of it by Mr. KEMBLE is not quite so much so, *Coriolanus* having been "food for worms" some few centuries before the composer was born.

Hamlet.—Whence arose the absurd custom of representing the first grave-digger in this play as wearing six or eight waistcoats, of which he divests himself previous to digging *Ophelia's* grave? Certainly, "*any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing*." Ridiculous as this custom may be, it would be almost impossible to abolish it while there are any Gallery guests at the theatre. BANNISTER excited much dissatisfaction among the refined part of the audience by only divesting himself of two or three previously to commencing his work. I have often heard it remarked, that he was not so good a grave-digger as EMERY by half a dozen of waistcoats. C. G. C.

THE HUMBLE PETITION

OF THE MORTALS IN THE PIT TO THE GODS IN THE GALLERY.

Ye Gods, who, in the Gallery sit,
Above us mortals in the Pit,

Who, most submissively petition,
 That you will pity our condition,
 And upon us throw no more
 Your orange-peel and apple-core,
 Nut-shells, and (all that sort of thing,)
 Which on us you so often fling ;
 And we implore you not to spit
 Your sacred phlegm into the Pit,
 Which fills each mortal's soul with dread,
 Lest it should light upon his head :
 These favours grant, great Gods, and we
 Will ever grateful be to thee. J. G.

THEATRICAL INQUISITION.

“ Of all the arts of imitation the dramatic art is the most precious inheritance bequeathed to us by the ancients ; it is the most seducing, the most ingenious, the most expanded, and the most esteemed ; the STAGE exhibits this art by depicting nature, by presenting man to man, face to face, and teaches us to be fathers, brothers, husbands, and friends ; accelerates the progress of our ideas, perfects our reason and our sensibility, and induces us to blush at vice, and cherish virtue.” DIBDIN.

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

Journal of Performances, with Remarks.

May 27.—Provoked Husband—Irish Tutor—Libertine—
 [Benefit of Messrs. BLANCHARD and GATLIFFR.]

28.—School for Scandal—TEA AND TURN OUT ; *or, Performers and Fashionables*—[1st time]—Giovanni in London—[Benefit of Mrs. GIBBS and Mr. YATES.]

A very crowded house gave proof of the high estimation in which both these performers are held by the public. Mr. YATES produced a new interlude, under the above title, merely as a vehicle for the display of his celebrated imitations, the whole of which, together with a variety of

new ones, were introduced, and called down the warm approbation of the audience.

29.—Comedy of Errors—CENT. PER CENT.; or, the *Masquerade*—[1st time.]

The opera of "*Clari*" had been announced for this evening, but, in consequence of Mr. PEARMAN's indisposition, SHAKSPEARE's comedy was substituted, which went off with its accustomed success. A new farce was afterwards performed, said to be the production of a noble author, whose literary fame has been lately associated with the whimsical trifle, "*The Irish Tutor*." The present offspring of his genius derives its appellation from the hero of the tale, an old usurious money lender, who obtains all the value he can for his money, and who is coupled with a dashing helpmate, who squanders the old gentleman's cash as fast as he makes it. The plot turns upon one single event of very ordinary occurrence, namely, the attempt of a prodigal young sprig of fashion, at the west end, to carry off the daughter of his old acquaintance at the east. The opportunity selected is on the occasion of a *masquerade* given by my lady, without the cognizance of her liege lord; and in order the more successfully to delude the old gentleman, a medical friend of the family, one *Dr. O'Rafferty* (admirably represented by CONNOR), prepares a somniferous dose for his hospitable guest, which our friend in "*'Change Alley*" very wisely does not take. However, his imagination is worked upon to such an extent, that he is made to believe he is really very ill, and accordingly is put to bed, but being troubled with the nightmare, rises from his couch, and by a most unlucky chance wanders amongst the masked night-brawlers, and is actually mistaken for "*Somno*" in disguise; but not trusting to this security, he assumes the garb of his trusty servant, *Dibbs*, and by this means overhears the plan for carrying off his daughter. *Dibbs* swears that his master is dying. All his friends exclaim that this is no reason why their sport should be interrupted. *Captain Dashmore* alone, the daughter's lover, happening to be in the secret, professes the utmost sympathy for the illness of old *Pennyfarthing*, and thus works his ready way to the old gentleman's affections, and obtains the hand of his fair, at least his weal-

thy daughter. Great ingenuity was required to impart interest to materials so common-place ; and still it must be admitted, that, notwithstanding considerable opposition, the piece excited a great deal of amusement. The dialogue is sprightly enough, though neither remarkable for elegance or novelty, and the situations exceedingly comical. A production of this kind cannot be tried by very severe rules of criticism ; but if laughter and merriment be tests of merit, "*Cent. per Cent.*" is highly meritorious. The various parts were sustained with much ability : nothing could be better than FARREN'S representation of the *old usurer*. The piece was announced for repetition amidst a mixed expression of applause and disapprobation. It is but justice to state that the former was completely predominant.

30.—King John—Ibid.

31.—Antiquary—Ibid.

June 2.—As You Like It—Vision of the Sun.

3.—Exile—Ibid.—[Benefit of Mr. FARLEY.]

4.—Clari—Cent. per Cent.—Irish Tutor.

5.—Virginius—Matrimony—Forest of Bondy—[Benefit of Miss FOOTE.]

6.—Rob Roy—Duel.

7.—Venice Preserved—Three Weeks after Marriage—Forty Thieves—[Benefit of Miss F. H. KELLY.]

It is a salutary custom that on benefit nights criticism should relax much of its severity, and adopt the language of encouragement and praise ; and it rejoices us to be enabled to employ such language in the present instance, without doing the slightest violence to our sober judgment, and without sacrificing an atom of truth at the shrine of gallantry and feeling. Miss KELLY, in her performance of *Belvidera*, justified all the praises we have hitherto bestowed on her talents, and fulfilled all the expectations created by her former exhibitions. By a sort of indiscreet policy, this young lady has been "laid upon the shelf" for the greater part of the present season. In spite of all the remonstrances, both public and private, made to the managers, her performances were confined to *Juliet*, and even these were at few and distant intervals. We do not take into account her being put into the part of *Rutland*,

in that wretched piece of business the "*Earl of Essex*," nor the miserable character assigned her in the "*Hugonot*," the trashiest of all Mr. SHIEL's trashy melo-dramas. The liberty of choice, which belongs to performers of a certain station at their benefits, enabled Miss K. to appear in a new and important character. *Belvidera* was, we think, a very hazardous selection: however, she went through the ordeal triumphantly, exhibited great sensibility, great power and variety of passion, and a felicitous and tasteful execution. There were faults about her acting, but they were faults inseparable from the extreme youth and deficient experience of the performer. That precision, confidence, and never-hesitating and never-failing power of conception, which nothing but long and painful practice can bestow were wanting. Her great and leading fault was extravagance; yet, in the midst of these blemishes, constant gleams of rich and genuine feeling burst forth with brilliancy. The very best part of her performance was the scene in which she narrates the loathsome advances of *Renault*, and clearly shewed what Miss K. can do. The crowded state of the house was a fine tribute to her character and talents. The box list brought back the old times, when the nobility and gentry held the theatre to be one of the most refined amusements of the metropolis. We trust it will read the managers a lesson as to the policy (to say nothing of the justice) of abandoning those foolish and perverse motives, which have hitherto barred up the access of Miss K. to the judgment and approbation of the public.

8.—Macbeth—Vision of the Sun.

10.—Much Ado about Nothing—Forest of Bondy.

11.—Clari—Cent. per Cent.—Irish Tutor.

12.—Comedy of Errors—Cent. per Cent.

13.—Provoked Husband—A Day after the Wedding—Midas—[Benefit of Miss CHESTER.]

14.—Barber of Seville—Duel—Paul and Virginia.

16.—Venice Preserved—Vision of the Sun.

17.—Maid Marian—Irish Tutor—Forty Thieves—[Benefit of Messrs. ISAACS and CLAREMONT.]

18.—Clari—Cent. per Cent.—Irish Tutor.

19.—Slave—Personation—Forest of Bondy—[Benefit of Mr. ABBOTT.]

20.—The Exile—A Concert—Blue Beard—[Benefit of Mr. C. TAYLOR.]

21.—Rob Roy—Forest of Bondy.

23.—Virginius—Vision of the Sun.

NEW DRURY LANE THEATRE.

Journal of Performances, with Remarks.

May 27.—Lord of the Manor—Monsieur Tonson—[Benefit of Miss STEPHENS.]

28.—Cymbeline—Swiss Villagers—All the World's a Stage.

29.—Hypocrite—Ibid.—Simpson and Co.

30.—Merchant of Venice—Marriage of Figaro—Halt of the Caravan.

31.—Lord of the Manor—Swiss Villagers—Simpson and Co.

June 2.—Africans—Family Jars—[Benefit of Mr. LISTON.]

3.—English Fleet in 1342—Devil to Pay—[Benefit of Mr. BRAHAM.]

4.—West Indian—Katherine and Petruchio—[Benefit of Mrs. DAVISON.]

5.—Surrender of Calais—Blue Devils—No Song no Supper—[Benefit of Mr. ELLISTON.]

6.—Othello—Monsieur Tonson.

7.—Simpson and Co.—No Song no Supper—Giovanni in London.

9.—Cymbeline—Divertisement—Ibid.

10.—Richard III.—Simpson and Co.

11.—Town and Country—Swiss Villagers—Frightened to Death.

12.—West Indian—My Spouse and I.

13.—Wild Oats—Halt of the Caravan—Simpson and Co.

14.—Othello—Marriage of Figaro—[Benefit of Mr. T. DIBDIN.]

The theatre this evening was not so fully attended as we should have expected until half price, when there was a crowded house. The only novelty was the appearance of a Mrs. YOUNG, from America, in the character of *Deeds*

mona; her reception was very favourable, but we do not think she is likely to outstrip our established favourites in the part. Mrs. YOUNG has a fair and agreeable countenance, with a pleasing person, and considerable knowledge of her profession, but it is impossible to judge of her general talents from this single performance.

16.—King Lear—Giovanni in London.

17.—Rivals—Festive Cottagers—Brother and Sister—
[Benefit of Mr. HARLEY.]

18.—Adelgitha—Hob in the Well—Turn Out—[Benefit of Messrs. KNIGHT and COOPER.]

19.—Ibid.—Festive Cottagers—Spectre Bridegroom—
[Benefit of Miss SMITHSON.]

20.—Venice Preserved—Blue Devils—Brother and Sister—
[Benefit of Mrs. W. WEST.]

21.—Guy Mannering—Swiss Villagers—My Spouse & I.

23.—Alexander the Great—Simpson and Co.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

This delicious little temple, which, when all others are shut, remains to console us for their loss, and sometimes to shew us what they ought to be, was flung open to the worshippers of the comic muse on the 16th. From the strength of the *corps dramatique*, the summer campaign promises to be a hot one: Mr. T. DIBDIN still heads the theatrical army, and his skill and experience promises a satisfactory direction of its talent. Of the better class of theatres this is the only one where the senses of sight and hearing are of any service. There is another thing which makes the "Little Theatre" more than commonly pleasant. All sorts of delightful recollections cling about it, of the best times, and the best productions of English humour. There was the chosen sojourn of FOOTR and the two COLMANS, and there have been cradled and nursed some of the most genuine comic actors that our stage ever possessed. It is endeared by its associations, comfortable in its appearance, and of precisely the size for enabling the audience to see and hear what is passing on the stage: hence it has always been liberally patronized, and we

hope never more liberally than it will be during the present season.

JUNE 16.—SUMMER FLIES ; or, *the Will for the Deed*—[1st time]—A Cure for the Heart Ache—Family Jars.

These were the performances for the night of opening. The first piece is founded on some obsolete old play, and is as light, airy, and about as long-lived, as the harmless insects whose name it bears. the materials, however, are as old as the trade of farce writing. Two elderly gentlemen [Messrs. WILLIAMS and YOUNGER] stop at a country inn, not far from Oxford, whither their journey is directed. The purpose of Mr. W. is to marry his son (an Oxford student) to the daughter of an old friend, *Stamford*; and that of Mr. Y. is to arrest this *Stamford*, under an assumed name of *Manley*. They find the young Oxonian already at the inn, where he has arrived in pursuit of *Miss Manley*, who (with her father) has been driven upon the stage for support. The equivoue arising from the name lasts for a few scenes, when the piece ends by the discovery that Mr. YOUNGER is a paltry scoundrel, who, together with a pettifogging attorney, (*Capias*) had been the cause of *Stamford's* (alias *Manly's*) ruin. Of course their villainy is punished, and the lovers are made happy. This is all we remember of the story. No one expects any thing like character in a piece of this sort; and as for wit, unless puns (and of the most ancient and venerable cast too) be wit, there was a plentiful lack of it. TERRY played the part of a landlord, who, having been in his youth a herald painter, in his maturer age does nothing but eternally afflict his customers with misappropriate quotations of scraps of Latin mottoes from the family arms he had formerly painted. In the comedy, a Mr. VINING, from Bath, came out as *Young Rapid*; he was full of vivacity, spirit, and bustle, but a little deficient in real humour, and appeared to want feeling in the pathetic parts; still he played very well, and was greatly applauded.

17.—Ibid.—School for Scandal—Agreeable Surprise.

18.—Ibid.—Heir at Law—Mrs. SMITH ! or, *the Wife and the Widow* [1st time.]

The chief novelty in the comedy was the appearance of a Mrs. JONES, from Norwich, as *Lady Duberley*; she is

much inclined to the *en-bon-point*, and, therefore, as far as the *personnel* is concerned, admirably qualified for the task she undertook. Her experience appears to have been extensive, and her knowledge of the stage enabled her to discharge very creditably the not very important part allotted to her. In that sort of stage business, to which this character belongs, Mrs. J. promises to be an acquisition. The new afterpiece is one of the duller we ever saw, although it has only one act to develop its insipidity. The single incident in this farce is, that two ladies of the name of *Smith*, one a *wife*, and the other a *widow*, one accompanied by her husband, and the other by her lover, take up their abode in the same lodging-house. The mutual jealousy of the husband and the lover give rise to some laborious *equivokes*, which produce "jars, and jealousies, and strife," between the parties. The uncle of the widow arrives, who is (of course) introduced to the husband of *Mrs. Smith*, who is not related to him. The lover of the same lady quarrels with the husband, and they are about to fight a duel, when all the mistakes are rectified by that simple contrivance (which might have been thought on before) of the production of the two ladies. LISTON was the husband, and by dint of his face and a light brown coat, he made the audience laugh so much between their yawning, that they were kept in indolent good humour, and endured the farce. It will last only a few nights.

19.—Ibid—Marriage of Figaro—Ibid.

20.—Spoiled Child—She Stoops to Conquer—Ibid.

21.—Romp—Hypocrite—Ibid.

23.—Rosina—A Cure for the Heart Ache—Ibid.

MINOR DRAMA.

COBOURG THEATRE.

May 9.—QUENTIN DURWARD [1st time.]—If we were to estimate the novel, on which this melo-drame is founded, by comparing it with its predecessors, we should not hesitate to pronounce it inferior to them all: although it

has doubtless uncommonly fine parts, passages, and portraitures, but still it wants that essential requisite in works of this kind—a story; it is also very unequal, and at times very heavy. It is neither history nor romance, yet it partakes of both; but the combination of the two has most certainly not been effected with the author's usual skill. The utter improbability of the story, is, however, at times considerably redeemed by the *air* of historic truth with which the author's principal personages are invested, and his descriptions of the manners of the age continually filled. The memoirs of COMINES, BRANTOME, FROISSART, and MONSTRELET, have been by him laid under frequent contribution; and such is the goodness of his pictures, and the fresh and stirring language of his dialogue, that we might, with a feeble effort of imagination, fancy ourselves transported to the castle of Plessis, and the age of LOUIS XI. The fulness of materials has, however, been of considerable disservice, and appears to have embarrassed the author; he has drawn too largely on his authorities, and he has frequently overwhelmed us with descriptions of dress, etiquette, and manners. He has not evinced that superior *tact* of letting us into the manners of his *dramatis personæ* by a few words, and of presenting a picture of the times, by a few strong and original touches, which has heretofore been his greatest distinction. The selfish hypocrisy of LOUIS is too long and too frequently dwelt upon, and the passionate ferocity of CHARLES the Bold would, we think, have been more impressive had there been less of it. We are presented with some powerful talent in the description of the low and unprincipled band of minions which LOUIS admitted into his confidence, and made the instruments of his policy or vengeance; we could easily have spared the barber and the hangman, for a little more of DUNOIS, CREVECŒUR, DE COMINES, and the other noble and chivalrous spirits of the times. In the character of WILLIAM DE LA MARCK, surnamed the *Wild Boar of Ardennes*, we have one of the grandest, most extraordinary, though at the same time most revolting, portraits of wild and sanguinary ferocity that we think ever was drawn; it is in the best and most finished style of the author. As for the hero himself, he belongs to his

class as they exist in the Scotch novels. *Waverly*, *Henry Morton*, *Lovell*, and *Peverill*, are but so many shadows of each other; they are all amiable, clever, brave, handsome, and accomplished young men, who assist in forwarding a plot and unravelling the catastrophe; who rarely show any originality of character, or act from any impulses of their own, but are carried on by an unusual current of events, until they arrive at the haven of happiness. The females are few and unimportant, with the exception of ISABELLA DE CROYE, one of those lovely creations in which this writer excels all others. There are several other fine-drawn portraits in this romance, but we have not room, neither is this the place to specify them; in fact, we have been led somewhat insensibly into this slight sketch of the merits and demerits of this work. The mere mention of a novel, "*by the author of Waverley*," carries with it a charm which we cannot part with, and we could sit for hours poring over the pages of this writer with a delightful enthusiasm, which not even the sublime poetry of BYRON himself, or the more delicious-breathing strains of the modern ANACREON, could ever inspire us with. If any thing harsh has passed our pen upon the subject, it is from the heartiness we feel for the unsullied fame of the writer, and we make the *amende honorable*, by observing, that, whatever may be its faults, "*Quentin Durward*" is a romance which no writer of the day can hope to excel, or indeed even equal. Our business is now with the stage appropriation of this novel; and here we must observe, that the adapter has deserved our thanks for the fidelity with which he has adhered to the language, plot, and other etceteras of the author, and the faults of which we take occasion to observe, none but the author himself could improve; we only regret the company at the Cobourg Theatre should so inefficiently represent these ancient portraits. The young, handsome, and intrepid *Durward*, in the hands of STANLEY—the passionate, head-strong, and ferocious *Charles the Burgundian*, in the hands of HOWELL! the crafty *Oliver* in those of FISHER—the *Hangman* in those of SLOMAN—the noble *Orleans*, JONES—the flower of French chivalry, *Dunois*, BRADLEY, *cum multis aliis*—"Out! out! upon such deliberate murderers." Surely,

if the author could see his best parts cut and mangled by the above gentlemen in the most heartless manner, he would throw down his winged pen, and forswear writing for ever. Still, doubtless, they did their best, and the old adage says, "*the best can do no more*;" yet we trust our readers will excuse us from entering into these horrifying details,—details, which would prove as little gratifying to them, as they would be grating and painful to the feelings of ourselves; and we only blame the managers from thrusting a drama founded on such a work on the public, when they must be well aware of the weakness of their company for its representation, and the representation of such a period as the latter part of the 15th century, when the minds of men were agitated with all the fierce and dark passions which belonged to that time of intellectual darkness and civil war. "*Quentin Durward*" has been already too much read for us to fill up our pages with an abridgement of its story; we have already observed, the adapter has adhered to that story, and we shall therefore merely observe, that the only characters worthy of notice were those of *Louis*, represented by ROWBOTHAM, and *Isabella* by Mrs. POPE. The former acted with considerable spirit, and displayed with much energy the principal points in the character of one of the most crafty, selfish, hypocritical, and unprincipled despots that ever wore a crown. Several of his scenes, and particularly the one when in the power of *Burgundy*, drew down very considerable applause,—applause which was well deserved: the latter played with judgment, although she wanted some few of those charming points, which, perhaps, never can be realized on the stage. HOWELL certainly forgot that, although ferocity was the chief feature in the composition of *Charles*, yet there was a tone of romantic and chivalrous gallantry in the customs and manners of the age, which, let whatever the character of the man be, always extended itself to the lovely and accomplished female, and that female an unprotected one. He certainly mistook his author. STANLEY attended somewhat more to his part than is generally the custom with him, and therefore we have no glaring fault to tax him with; and the *De la March* of SMITH served to display his commanding stature to ad-

vantage. The scenery was now and then decently painted, but the architectural parts were of the oddest style we ever witnessed: however, we expected nothing, and were therefore not disappointed. The piece was well received by rather a crowded house.

DEATH OF LIFE IN LONDON; or, *the Funeral of Tom and Jerry*. This was a slight sketch apparently founded on the idea given in a print published by PIERCE EGAN, and consists of the events arising out of a bit of chicanery practised by those renowned heroes, who undergo all the ceremonies administered to defunct personages. The thing may be denominated a "catchpenny," and has had the desired effect. Several parodies on the most popular tunes were well given, and the whole created a considerable deal of mirth.—"*Whittington and his Cat*" has drawn very good audiences.—A new piece, called "*THE MASSACRE OF CYPRUS; or, the Grecian Amazon*," founded on the late events in Greece, was laid aside before we could spare time to see it, we therefore suppose it would not have been worth our trouble.

ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE.

This house has produced nothing in the way of novelty since our last notice; indeed, it seems to have lost somewhat of its ancient reputation. "*Tom and Jerry*" has been performing for some time, with an addition, which we are sorry to see the manager have recourse to, we mean the introduction of CRIBB and SPRING, the boxers, on the stage, displaying their science in the art of self-defence, than which nothing is more calculated to ruin the respectability of the theatre. A correspondent, who signs himself J. F. J—s, has sent us a long string of complaints on this degradation, and comments in very severe terms on this subject. Some of his remarks are as follow:—

"If persons feel any inclination to witness these exhibitions, they may easily gratify themselves, by going either to the Tennis, or to the Fives Court; but I am certain no lady or real gentleman would attend a theatre to witness such performances, which they must be well aware

are only fit for dustmen and tostermongers. I am not an enemy to pugilistic displays, but they should be in their proper place, and where only those who are partial to them may attend them; but the stage of a theatre, I must decidedly aver, cannot be considered as a proper spot for their exhibition. Female modesty, at least, should be respected; and what can be a greater insult to it, than the appearance of two fellows on a stage appointed for dramatic exhibitions, stripped half naked, boxing each other round the platform, while the other performances are suspended for this *intellectual* display!—a display merely intended to gratify the vitiated taste of the low-lived gentry in the shilling gallery, while the boxes display a ‘beggarly account of empty benches.’ They are, at best, exhibitions of a brutal nature; and I think, if Mr. DAVIS reflects a little on the irreparable damage he is bringing on his theatre, he will substitute performances of a different tenor. If these dirty doings are at all encouraged, it will not be long ere we shall have still more disgraceful scenes enacted, as bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and badger-baiting, and thus still farther vulgarize the taste of the lower part of the community.”—Mr. C. DIBDIN is, we believe, the stage manager of this concern, and surely he has, in the resources of his own imagination, a wide scope to work on for the amusement of the public; at all events, we perfectly agree with our correspondent in his remarks, and think the sooner the above-mentioned degrading shows are banished from the stage of the Amphitheatre the better.

ROYALTY THEATRE.

We have contrived during the last month to pay a visit to this house, after a very long absence, and found things were conducted in a much better style than they were formerly used to be. A very respectable company, together with an interesting piece, entertained us much. The house was very crowded, and the regularity with which the whole was conducted merited such a return. The first piece was named the “*Mutineers of the Bounty*,” and displayed

some very excellent acting by Mr. GOMERSAL, as *Adams*, the leader of the mutiny, GALLOT as the ill-fated captain of the ship, and a young lady (whose name we forget) as the captain's wife. Our old friend, WYATT, from the Surrey, we found as amusing as ever; he played a cockney boy of eighteen, from the purlieus of Doctors' Commons, with much genuine humour, and made us laugh heartily at his application of his "life-preserver" to save him from drowning. Mr. BRYANT played an Irish fisherman with much nature, and sang an Hibernian medley extremely well. BEVERLEY, late of the Cobourg, acted a faithful British tar in a style which reflects great credit on him; we scarcely thought him capable of so much genuine feeling. He appears to have ridded himself of that foolery, which, when at the latter house, he thought necessary towards making himself a favourite with the galleries. The scenery and mechanism of this piece were truly admirable, particularly that in which an immense large ship is displayed, riding in stately majesty, filled with the crew, who manage the ropes and sails as if they had been bred to it from their infancy. The scene also in which the captain, his wife, and faithful boatswain, are represented on a raft in the midst of the ocean, with all the horrors of starvation before them, is one of intense interest, and is equally well managed. A petite piece, of a most comical description, called "*KING JOHN; or, the Origin of Horn Fair*," founded on one of the night adventures of that monarch with a miller's wife, followed, and kept the house convulsed with laughter, although there were rather too many *double entendres*, which might as well have been left out, without detriment to the mirth of the piece. GOMERSAL played the *Miller* excellently. The evening's entertainments concluded with a pantomime, founded on the never-failing story of "*Cinderella*," and is one of the best we have witnessed for some time, and introduced an excellent *Harlequin*, *Columbine*, and *Pantaloon* to our notice. The *Clown* was a Mr. HILL, whom we have before had occasion to recommend to the favourable opinion of our readers. We saw him to much advantage on this evening, and for activity, comic expression, and knowledge of his business, we certainly think he is not sur-

passed "in his line" by any one now on the stage; he received great and well-deserved applause: in fact, the whole of the performance seemed to give universal satisfaction

COUNTRY THEATRICALS.

TWICKSBURY, May 28.—This new theatre opened yesterday evening with "*The School of Reform*," and "*Too late for Dinner*," in which several amateurs acted very respectably, particularly Mr. I. WEAVER as *Frederick*, Dr. WARNER as *Old Tyke*, Captain BARLOW as *Tyke*, Mr. W. RICKETTS as *Lord Avondale*, and Mr. RICKETTS as the *Servant*. Mrs. POTTER played *Mrs. Ferment* very ably, as did also Mrs. DOWARD the part of *Mrs. St. Clair*, and Miss JOHNSTONE that of *Shela*. After the play, a Mr. HUNTLEY sang, with considerable taste, "*On a cold flinty rock*," accompanying himself on the pianoforte, and Mr. ST. ALBIN, from Birmingham, displayed some very elegant dancing. After this the *farce* began, and a *farce* indeed it was; for the acting (with the exception of BARLOW as *Frank*, WM. RICKETTS as "rich brother *Frederick*," and I. MOORE as *Robert Rafter*, the latter of whom gave the Yorkshire dialect very excellently) was really wretched, and I trust these will be the last attempts of some of the amateurs: I perhaps should mention that the ladies were tolerable. The house was crowded to excess (it holds about 700.), and on entering every one immediately felt the improvements which had been made in the old building. The gallery was originally behind the boxes; but there is now a complete range of boxes, over which are the slips, with the gallery in the centre: the whole of which are considerably enlarged. The proscenium extends to the centre of the *old pit*, and the *tout ensemble* has a pleasing effect, for the decorations are tastefully conceived and executed. J.B.

STOURBRIDGE.—This neat and elegant little theatre having undergone considerable repairs and decorations, opened (under Mr. CRISP) on Monday, April 21, with the "*Heir at Law*," and "*A Rowland for an Oliver*." On the fol-

lowing Wednesday (the performances being limited to three nights a week) was represented "*Henri Quatre*." *Henri*, by C. CRISP, was but very indifferently supported—indeed the "beggary account of empty benches" perhaps checked his usual ardour; Mr. VINING sustained *Eugene* with discretion, and Mr. SHUTER [*Jocrisse*] merited the applause he received. As to Mr. HORTON's *Tully*, silence will be the highest eulogy that can be passed. Miss POOLE, as *Florence*, looked and played charmingly; Miss E. QUANTRILL's *Clotilda* was very naturally enacted, and with a great portion of animation; and Miss CRISP's *Louison* was a most engaging performance. This young lady, who is not more than seventeen, has already evinced capabilities in the first line of characters, both in tragedy and comedy, of the highest order. The piece, however, gave little or no satisfaction, probably from the deficiency of that magnificence and splendour so essential to its representation. "X. Y. Z." followed, and the interest it excited made a tolerable reparation. Friday, April 25, "*A Cure for the Heart Ache*." *Young Rapid*, by CRISP, was creditably sustained; but no actor now on the stage can compete with ELLISTON's vivacious personation of the part. Mr. C. would do well to dispense with a little of the blustering vulgar air and manner which uniformly perverts his noblest efforts. VINING was very successful as *Charles Stanley*, and SHUTER's *Vortex* gave general satisfaction; GEORGE CRISP's *Frank Outlands* was an admirable personation. "*Monsieur Tonson*" followed, and met with an enthusiastic reception from a crowded house. This success may be mainly attributed to the admirable acting of Messrs. SHUTER and VINING as *Morbleau* and *Tom King*: the high-wrought spirit, mingled with a natural portion of dry humour, which the former infused into his part, drew forth shouts of approbation, and continually convulsed the audience with laughter. Miss POOLE [*Adolphine de Courci*] would really have graced a metropolitan stage; and the flattering and marked sanction that crowned the efforts of Miss QUANTRILL, as *Mad. Bellgrade*, bore ample testimony of the esteem in which her talents are held. The favourable auspices under which the present company commenced their career give powerful proofs of

the patronage the manager has laudably endeavoured to secure. "*Tom and Jerry*" has been announced. W. H. C.

PORTSMOUTH, April 28.—This evening was performed "*The West Indian*" and "*Lodoiska*"—[benefit of Mr. KELLY the manager.] All the characters were well sustained.—May 2. "*Secrets worth Knowing*," "*Match Making*"—[benefit of Mr. and Mrs. SHALDERS.] It was gratifying to the feelings of every one to see the excellent opinion which is universally entertained of these performers so ardently expressed.—7th. Miss KELLY's night: the boxes had been engaged months before, principally by families from Southampton. The house was crowded to excess by the most fashionable company, who all seemed desirous to evince their approbation of the high abilities and meritorious exertions of this amiable young lady. On the 9th, "*Oroonoko*," the part of *Imoinda* by Miss K., who acted in a style I never saw surpassed: one error I would advise her to correct, and that is a certain hastiness of pronunciation, which at times prevents some of her words being distinctly heard. The theatre closed on the 12th of May.

F. C.—E.

CHICHESTER.—This house opened on the 14th of May with the "*Honey Moon*," *Juliana*, Miss KELLY, and *Rolando*, Mr. KELLY, were highly applauded. The house has been on every evening since its opening extremely well attended.

C.

NEWCASTLE, May 16.—In my last I mentioned that, in consequence of a melancholy accident, this theatre had closed for a short time. A catastrophe so fatal in its effects spread a gloom over the town, which forboded ill to the interests of the manager. The result, however, has singularly evinced the fallacy of those ominous prognostications, and there can be no doubt but that the season has been much more successful than it would have been had such an accident not occurred; indeed, it is on all hands admitted, that this has been decidedly the most successful season under the present management. I know of no way of explaining this anomaly, except the general feeling excited in Mr. DE CAMP's favour, by his great and indefatigable exertions on the melancholy occasion alluded to,

and the wish that he should not suffer from a circumstance, however deplorable, over which he had no controul. Perhaps, also, the attraction of "*Tom and Jerry*" might contribute considerably. This piece was followed by other novelties, as "*Maid Marian*," "*Julian*," and the "*Italian Wife*:" with the former, of course, you are perfectly acquainted, but the latter is not so well known. It is a tragedy from the pen of Mr. THOMAS DOUBLEDAY, a gentleman of this town, and has never been acted until brought out on these boards, for the benefit of Mr. BUTLER, with a view to secure a good house; it had the desired effect. It had been published only a few weeks, and the author, on its announcement for representation, entered his protest against it, on the ground that it was not fitted for the stage. The story would be too long to detail here; but I may just observe, that, though in its present state it is ill adapted for dramatic effect, I think, by judicious alterations, it might be made suitable for representation. Several of the speeches are too long, though they not unfrequently display considerable talent for poetical composition. The dialogue is often colloquial, even vulgar, and unsuited to the dignity of the tragic muse. Mr. MUDE as *Ignatio* in this play, and as *Julian* in the tragedy of that name, evinced powers of no ordinary description. His performance, however, is seldom equable; and it is not very uncommon to see passages of strong feeling slurred over most unworthily; his acting wants discrimination. Mrs. W. CLIFFORD, whose line of acting is heavy tragedy, or, perhaps, more properly, masculine heroines, as *Helen M'Gregor*, *Meg Merrilies*, *Joan of Arc*, &c. has been put forward in characters of every description; she has been indeed the only tragic actress in the company. Your Mr. LISTON has been here for four nights—Friday, May 2, the theatre closed for the season with "*Abroad and at Home*." After the play, Mr. DE CAMP addressed the audience, thanked them for their liberal patronage, acknowledged he had had an excellent season, promised, when he appeared again before them, to bring a good company, and stated that he had engaged Miss STEPHENS for race week, and Mr. MACREADY for the assizes.

DRAMATICUS.

PLYMOUTH DOCK, May 1.—This miserable theatre is now open for the amusement of the Jack Tars and their doxies, who are, in fact, the only personages that frequent it, for no one of respectability can enter it. The house is in a most filthy condition, and the scenery is old and good for nothing. The performances, on the 28th April, were selected by and under the high patronage of the midshipmen of his Majesty's ship Bulwark [the benefit of Mrs. LEWIS], and consisted of "*The Two Pages of Frederic the Great*," "*Love in Humble Life*," and "*No Song no Supper*." The boxes contained about thirty persons, the pit less than one dozen, the gallery not half full. After (what was termed) the overture, up went the curtain, and introduced Mr. WILTON as *Phelp*, which he got through decently; the great *Frederic*, by Mr. ROBERT DYER, which was performed extremely well, although his voice now and then fell into its usual "dying strains;" *Madame Phelps* was played by a Cornish lass, Miss PENPHRAZE, full, fat, and flirting; the others I shall not condescend to notice. The performances on the 30th were "*The Murdered Guest*," and "*Tereta Tomkins*," for WILTON's benefit; but really a visitor ought, instead of paying, to be himself paid for sitting to see the mummery at this Palace of Discord!

S. S. S.

PLYMOUTH, April 29.—I turn with pleasure from the above, to state to you the superior manner in which things are conducted here; and it is the more remarkable, as one company nearly serves both places; but here every thing is conducted with propriety. The building outside and in is very superb, and does great credit to the architect, Mr. FOLSTONE; it is elegantly fitted up with every accommodation. It has a saloon handsomely decorated, the scenery is new and good, and the dresses and decorations superb. The performance was "*The Rivals*," and "*Killing no Murder*," in which old DAWSON and his wife sustained the parts of *Sir Anthony* and *Mrs. Malaprop* admirably, and *Acres*, by young DAWSON, a performance of the first water: the rest were so, so. The house was thinly attended.

SAM. SAM'S SON.

MR. DRAMA,

I was much disgusted at the futile attempts of F. C—E in your two last numbers to depreciate the talents of Mrs. DAVIES; but I beg to inform your correspondent, that Mrs. DAVIES' merit as an actress, and her respectability as an individual, are too firmly established to be shaken by such unmerited and unfounded assertions; nor should I have condescended to notice such contemptible slander, were it not that I feel an interest in unmasking the cowardly assassin, who has basely essayed to injure the well-earned reputation, and wound the feelings of an amiable and unoffending female. In vain does F. C—E attempt to conceal his identity—the veil is too thin for concealment; and as a frequenter of the theatre, and an admirer of the histrionic art, it is not a little gratifying to me, while vindicating Mrs. D. from his foul aspersions, to tell him, that I not only know him and his pitiful abettors, but that I am also fully aware of the vile motive which stimulates his malevolence. The very liberal patronage Mrs. D. has been honoured with, and the unbiassed plaudits she has invariably received, are the best proofs of her merits. That she has a perfect knowledge of the English language, and a just conception of her author, (two very essential points) no *competent* judge, who has witnessed her performance, will attempt to contradict; and these alone, Mr. DRAMA, are acquirements which cannot be advanced in favour of some of those whom F. C—E has been employed to eulogize, not only at Mrs. DAVIES' expense, but with the sacrifice of truth.

Respecting Mrs. DAVIES' abilities as a singer, although she possesses a strong and harmonious voice, and is (as I am credibly informed) an excellent musician, she never comes forward in singing characters, unless it be to aid the representation of pieces which require more vocalists than provincial companies usually possess; and as such extra exertions are solely made with the view of forwarding the interest of the managers, or to assist a performer in the introduction of some novelty on a benefit night, surely no liberal mind would attempt *even* to criticise, much less to overwhelm with scurrility and falsehood, an actress who has been induced to deviate from her regular walk upon such beneficent principles. I witnessed Mrs.

D.'s performance in the *Countess Almaviva*, and most solemnly assert, that I do not think the character could have been better sustained: the *very difficult* songs appertaining to the part she had too much modesty to attempt; but in two most beautiful duets, which are absolutely essential to the piece, she executed her part in a very *chaste* and *correct* manner, which I presume alone prevented their producing that electrifying effect, which, according to F. C—E's remarks, some other parts of the music caused. But F. C—E's friendly advice to Mrs. D. "to leave off so palpable an imitation of Miss KELLY's manner," is truly laughable and ridiculous; for, can it be for a moment supposed, that an actress of Mrs. DAVIES' acknowledged ability and discernment would risk her popularity by adopting a manner that would inevitably ruin the well-earned reputation she so deservedly enjoys in the estimation of a judicious public? With respect to the ages of the two ladies (a very delicate topic to canvass), I imagine there cannot be much difference; but if appearances form any criterion, Mrs. DAVIES has decidedly the advantage: to which I will add, that she possesses, in an eminent degree, the polished manners of a lady both in public and in private, as the undivided suffrages of the most respectable families in the whole theatrical circuit of the company to which she belongs amply testify.

To enable you, Mr. DRAMA, to form a just estimate of the correctness and veracity of F. C—E's remarks, I affirm that this theatre, on the evening of the 2d of April, so far from being *crowded to suffocation*, was, on the contrary, very *thinly attended*—that the tragedy of "*Julian*" has *never* been produced on the stage—that the first representation of "*The Duel*" at this theatre was on the 12th of May, for the benefit of Miss COLLINS—and that "*The Actress of All Work*" has never been personated here by any other than Mrs. DAVIES.

The foregoing, though very inadequate to her merit, being a small tribute to the character of the lady who has been so vilely aspersed, I am persuaded, your love of justice will induce you to give it equal publicity in your valuable publication, with the malignant attack which has caused its production; which will much oblige yours, &c.

Portsmouth, June 12, 1823.

CANDIDUS.

Printed by T. and J. Elvey, Castle Street, Holborn.

